

**REMARKS**

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated January 27, 2009 in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1-15 have been cancelled. Claims 16-27 are pending.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the courtesies extended by Examiners Hijaz and Glessner in telephone interviews conducted on February 25 and March 3, 2009.

More particularly, in a telephone interview on February 25, 2009, it was argued on behalf of Applicant that the references relied upon did not fairly suggest the subject matter of certain claims presented for consideration at that time. It was acknowledged that Ruiz et al. USP 5,414,972 appears to be the closest prior art to the present invention. However, Ruiz et al '972 does not disclose the present invention. Additionally, the reference to Fordyce is somewhat non-analogous in that it relates to a structure which is distinctly different from, and used for a different purpose than the present invention. It was further argued that, absent the present disclosure, one of ordinary skill in the art would not look to Fordyce for any teaching applicable to the structure of Ruiz et al. '972.

In view of the discussion on February 25, 2009, present claims 16-27 were proposed. Each independent claim recites subject matter which is patentably distinguished from the references relied upon, viewed individually or in combination with each other. In a telephone discussion on March 3, 2009, Examiner Hijaz indicated that this amendment, presenting claims 16-27 would be entered and the claims would be allowed.

Applicant again gratefully acknowledges the cooperative effort on the part of Examiner Hijaz and Examiner Glessner.

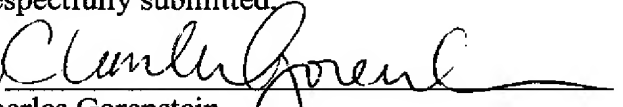
For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 16-27 are allowable and the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration is respectfully solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Charles Gorenstein, Reg. No. 29,271 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: March 5, 2009

Respectfully submitted

By 

Charles Gorenstein

Registration No.: 29,271

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant